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**BULLETIN
OF THE
CENTER FOR
CHILDREN'S
BOOKS**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH ANNOTATIONS

- * Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
- R Recommended.
- Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
- M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
- NR Not recommended.
- SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
- SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

C.U. Curricular Use.

D.V. Developmental Values.

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Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 37

MARCH, 1984

Number 7

New Titles for Children and Young People

Agee, Jon. *Ellsworth*; written and illus. by Jon Agee. Pantheon, 1983. 83-2325. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-85995-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-95995-7. 29p. Library ed. \$10.99; Trade ed. \$10.95.

M and movement in his illustrations for the story of a dog whose romping was detected
K-2 by his academic colleagues. Ellsworth, a soberly dressed economics professor, had been accepted by all his human colleagues, but when he moved into his after-class behavior (clothes off, and back to barking, chasing, and burying bones) and was seen, Ellsworth was dismissed. After moping about dreaming of a new career, he decided he would simply spend his time being a dog—preferably in the company of a certain attractive poodle. The pictures have a robust humor; the story is adequately told but weakly conceived, boiling down to dog acts human, then acts like a dog.

Anderson, Norman D. *Ferris Wheels*; by Norman D. Anderson and Walter R. Brown. Pantheon, 1983. 83-3959. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-85460-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-95460-2. 53p. illus. with photographs. Library ed. \$10.99; Trade ed. \$10.95.

R Although almost all wheels that give people rides are referred to as Ferris wheels,
5-8 similar devices—smaller and hand-powered—were recorded as being in existence as long ago as 1620. Several wheels, hand or steam powered, were operating in the United States by the time George Ferris, an engineer, proposed to the planners of the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago that he build a giant wheel with thirty-six cars, each carrying forty passengers, so that fair-goers could view the grounds from above. A huge success, it was imitated—and continues to be—at small carnivals and giant amusement parks throughout the world. The authors provide interesting details about the structure, the problems, and the success or failure of many wheels, in a text that is profusely illustrated by drawings and photographs and that is written in a brisk, straightforward style.

Asimov, Isaac, ed. *Young Mutants*; ed. by Isaac Asimov, Martin Greenberg, and Charles Waugh. Harper, 1984. 83-48444. Library ed. ISBN 0-06-020157-6; Paper ed. ISBN 0-06-020156-8. 224p. Library ed. \$10.89; Paper ed. \$7.95.

R An intriguing collection gets off to a fine start with Ray Bradbury's "Hail and
6- Farewell" and Frederic Brown's "Keep Out," the first as poignant as the second is chilling. This is one of the best in the series of theme-oriented anthologies of science fiction that Asimov, Greenberg, and Waugh have compiled; save for the over-extended "The Children's Room," by Raymond Jones (and it's not bad) the book is notable for the high quality and the variety of the selections.

Barklem, Jill. *The Secret Staircase*; written and illus. by Jill Barklem. Philomel, 1983. 83-6270. ISBN 0-399-20994-8. 29p. \$8.95.

Ad 4-6 yrs. All of the characters are mice in this gentle book, and both the characters and their discovery of a secret suite of rooms at the Old Oak Palace (a honeycomb of rooms within a tree) should appeal to young children despite the sedate aura of the story. Lord and Lady Woodmouse are to give a great feast on Midwinter's Eve and their daughter Primrose is to give a joint recitation with her friend Wilfred. The two little mice go to the attic to look for costumes and find, behind a tiny door, a magnificent suite of rooms and wonderful costumes. However, they tell nobody and nothing ever comes of it; Primrose and Wilfred simply appear at the party, perform, and keep their secret, thinking of how they can play in their new-found secret place in the future. Both the text and the pictures have a staid, old-fashioned quality, but the simplicity of the writing style and the engaging details of the pictures should hold children's interest.

Bond, Nancy. *A Place to Come Back To*. Atheneum, 1984. 83-48745. ISBN 0-689-50302-4. 204p. \$12.95.

R 6-9 Charlotte, who was twelve years old in *The Best of Enemies* (reviewed in the September, 1978 issue) is now an adolescent. She doesn't quite understand why it is so unsatisfying that she is always paired with Andy, and Oliver with Andy's sister Kath; her developing awareness of her love for Oliver is one of the two plot lines of the book—the other is Oliver's painful adjustment to the death of the great-uncle with whom he happily has lived. Oliver inherits the house, and it (as well as the Concord setting) is his "place to come back to," a promise for the future after he goes away with his mother and her new husband, who feel he is too young to stay in Concord on his own. This is more cohesive than the first book, a perceptive story written in polished style.

D.V. Death, adjustment to; Friendship values

Boyd, Selma. *I Met a Polar Bear*; by Selma and Pauline Boyd; illus. by Patience Brewster. Lothrop, 1983. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-01881-5; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-01885-8. 28p. Library ed. \$9.12; Trade ed. \$10.00.

Ad 4-6 yrs. Bright colors, clean lines, and quiet humor make the illustrations attractive in this story of an imaginative child who patiently explains to his teacher why he's late in coming to school. He diligently reports every detail of his encounters with a polar bear, an earthworm, and an ant, each of which he helps return to its home—and that's the story; amusing, simply told, but more of a repeated joke than a structured story.

D.V. Animals, kindness to; Imaginative powers

Boynton, Sandra. *A is for Angry*; written and illus. by Sandra Boynton. Workman, 1983. 83-40038. ISBN 0-89480-453-7. 37p. \$9.95.

R 4-6 yrs. The idea of combining an alphabet book with a series of adjectives probably shouldn't work, but it does—con brio! First, this fulfills the primary requirements of an alphabet book: the letters are large and clear, the word-association is provided, and readers can see upper and lower case letters. The pages are spacious, the concept handled with humor, and the animal characters that illustrate the adjectives are well-drawn, appropriately angry (anteater) or bashful (bear). Slightly cartoonish, the drawings are brisk, bright, and funny. A winner.

Carey, Helen H. *How to Read a Newspaper*; by Helen H. Carey and Judith E. Greenberg. Watts, 1983. 83-10529. ISBN 0-531-04672-9. 83p. \$9.40.

R
7-10 One of a series of books designed to develop social studies skills, this describes the function of a newspaper and its format, discusses what makes news worthy of being printed, and analyzes the various parts of a newspaper. Readers will learn about the responsibilities of each member of a newspaper staff; explanations are provided for terms like "libel" or "bias" and for the way to detect bias or lack of objectivity; a final chapter on "Using the Newspaper in the Classroom" gives explicit advice on using maps and graphs and using material from newspapers in a report. A bibliography and an index are provided for a book that is occasionally repetitive or simplistic but that gives useful information clearly.

C.U. Social studies

Casey, Brigid. *Sled Dogs*; by Brigid Casey and Wendy Haugh; illus. with photographs, old prints, and diagrams. Dodd, 1983. 83-14134. ISBN 0-396-08225-4. 80p. \$9.95.

Ad
5-7 The authors, neither of whom appear to be experts on the subject, have done a competent research job, organizing the material adequately. They describe the several breeds of sled dogs, discuss the ways in which the dogs are trained, fed, hitched, and driven, and describe the ways such dogs are used in competitive racing. A glossary and an index are included; there are many photographs, almost all of which tend to be of poor (fuzzy) quality.

Cazet, Denys. *Big Shoe, Little Shoe*; written and illus. by Denys Cazet. Bradbury, 1984. 83-21362. ISBN 0-02-717820-X. 28p. \$12.95.

R
K-2 Louie, a rabbit, beats his grandfather at a checker game, then hides Grandpa's shoes so he can't go to work. He tricks Grandpa (who is agreeably cooperative) into taking him along to deliver laundry by hiding Grandpa's shoes and then putting them on; obviously, it's Big Shoe who has control; naturally, Grandpa has to shuffle along in Louie's Little Shoe and take the subservient role. This isn't an impressive story structurally, but it's told in a light, pleasant style and it shows the rapport between generations in amusing fashion.

D.V. Grandparent-child relations

Chorao, Kay. *Lemon Moon*; written and illus. by Kay Chorao. Holiday House, 1983. 83-220. ISBN 0-8234-0490-0. 27p. \$8.95.

Ad
3-5 yrs. Textural effects, ornamentation, and soft figures are the characteristics of Chorao's pencil drawings; they illustrate a rhyming text in which a small boy excitedly tells his grandmother about a wonderful dream. "My brain is too dusty, my bones just too rusty, but how I do wish I could join in your trip, and travel through space with a moon for a ship," Grams says as she tucks the child in. Then he dreams, again, of a moon balloon that carries him through the air, and this time Grams sails out of her bed and joins him in flight. Young children may find the transition from realistic text about a dream, to the wordless and fanciful enactment puzzling. The writing is adequate but the structure is fragile, more a vehicle for the pictures than a shaped story.

Cole, Joanna. *Bony-Legs*; illus. by Dirk Zimmer. Four Winds, 1983. 82-7424. ISBN 0-590-07882-8. 44p. \$8.95.

Bright pictures with a strong sense of design illustrate a simplified retelling of one of the Baba Yaga stories. Sent to borrow needle and thread from a neighbor, little

- R 1-3 Sasha wanders into the home of Bony-Legs (Baba Yaga, the Russian witch whose house stands on chicken legs) and is saved from being the witch's dinner when the dog, cat, and gate repay Sasha's kindness and help her escape. Although this is intended (and nicely gauged) for the beginning independent reader, it's also a good choice for reading aloud to younger children.

C.U. Reading aloud; Reading, beginning

D.V. Kindness

Coontz, Otto. *Isle of the Shape-shifters*. Houghton, 1983. 83-12828. ISBN 0-395-34552-9. 209p. \$6.95.

- M 6-8 Paperback size and tightly bound, this occult fantasy is set on Nantucket Island where a covey of inheritors of tribal manitou are waiting for the child they hope will save the island from a speculator. Theo doesn't know she's to save the island, doesn't even know her magical powers (every time she has a spell, it affects the local Richter scale) and only knows that she feels she's being watched and that she's often frightened. Coontz gets in some dramatic atmosphere and a bit of island lore, but the story is so overwhelmed by too many characters, spirits, symbols, extraneous circumstances (Theo's vicious stepmother, who plays a large but pointless part) that it is self-defeating. It may appeal to die-hard lovers of the weird tale.

Cummings, E. E. *Hist Whist and Other Poems for Children*; ed. by George James Firmage; illus. by David Calsada. Liveright, 1983. ISBN 0-87140-640-3. 40p. \$10.95.

- R 3-6 Finely detailed drawings, black and white, have a range of effectiveness in composition; on almost every page of this tall book, an illustration faces one of twenty children's poems, sixteen of which were privately printed in 1962. Like other works of this poet, these selections convey a strong relish for word-play, word-turning; subjects are child-oriented, and the added appeal for many children will be the humor of the concepts.

Dank, Milton. *A UFO Has Landed*; by Milton Dank and Gloria Dank. Delacorte, 1983. 82-18353. Library ed. ISBN 0-385-29297-X; Paper ed. (Dell) ISBN 0-440-99160-9. 112p. Library ed. \$12.95; Paper ed. \$2.25.

- M 4-6 The Galaxy Gang, six intrepid boys and girls who investigate mysteries, decide that they will try to save the job of a favorite teacher who has been threatened with dismissal because he insists he's seen a strange, tubular machine that gives off a green glow, and bubble-headed figures standing near it in a marsh at midnight. Some of them see the same sight, but they have an idea about what might be causing it; they break into a factory and are caught, get away and are chased, are almost drowned, and so on. Putting clues together and keeping their nocturnal activities concealed from parents, they gather enough evidence to prove that what the teacher saw exists—not a UFO but a secretive practice of illegal dumping of chemical wastes. There's plenty of action and danger to appeal to readers, but the writing style is pedestrian and the plot is as unconvincing as the children's unobserved freedom to prowling about at night.

Daughtry, Duanne, illus. *What's Inside?* Knopf, 1984. 83-19565. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-86249-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-96249-4. 20p. illus. with photographs. Library ed. \$8.99; Trade ed. \$7.95.

A series of paired black and white photographs is used to expand the concepts of "inside" and "outside" in a book for very young children. The photographs, of good

R 1-3 yrs. quality and of familiar objects, tell the story; there are no words. The pattern: an envelope (turn of page) the party invitation inside it/ some pea pods (turn of page) the opened pods/ a small coin purse (turn of page) the purse open, coins spilling out. This isn't the first time this has been done, but there's always room for another when it's as nicely done as this.

DePaola, Thomas Anthony, illus. *Sing, Pierrot, Sing*. Harcourt, 1983. 83-8403. ISBN 0-15-274988-8. 28p. \$11.95.

R K-2 The audience may not recognize the traditional costumes and symbols in this read-aloud picture book, but they can easily follow the framed sequences and understand the story line. Pierrot serenades Columbine, by whom he is smitten, and is desolate when he learns (by throwing a rose to his lady love, and having her lover Harlequin step out on the balcony and catch it) that she belongs to another. He climbs a ladder to the moon, where he sits morosely until one of his admirers tosses him a rose; then he climbs down and plays and sings to his appreciative audience. The stylized pictures have a restrained use of color and have more cohesion (perhaps because they must tell the story) than do the illustrations in most of Tomie dePaola's books.

Dickinson, Mike. *My Brother's Silly*; written and illus. by Mike Dickinson. Andre Deutsch, 1983. 82-073995. ISBN 0-233-97531-4. 26p. \$8.95.

Ad 3-5 yrs. This is a boy's running commentary on the way he and his younger brother spend Saturday, when Mum works and Dad is in charge. Sleepy and grumpy, Dad tolerates the boys' antics, but he keeps saying the younger child is silly. The reason: the boy says he doesn't want to *get* postcards, he wants to *be* one, or he doesn't want to *play* football (soccer, actually, since this is a British book) he wants to *be* one. Being a Dad is hard work, the little brother says, so he'll stay a little boy forever. The story ends, "My Dad says . . . Perhaps he's not so silly after all!" There is humor in the concept, but the repetition of the pattern weakens the story, which is simply told and nicely child-oriented. The illustrations (which include misty imaginary scenes of the child as a postcard, a ball, a slug, a hat, etc.) are bright with color and action.

D.V. Father-son relations; Imaginative powers

Drucker, Malka. *Series TV: How a Television Show is Made*; by Malka Drucker and Elizabeth James. Houghton/Clarion, 1983. 83-2119. ISBN 0-89919-142-8. 110p. illus. with photographs. \$11.95.

R 5-9 In a comprehensive and detailed survey of how episodes for filmed or taped television series are made, the authors begin with a story idea and story conference, and discuss every aspect of rehearsing, planning, sets (in the studio or on location or backlots), filming or taping, performing, editing, and rating. The text, written in a crisp and lucid style, includes explanations of the work of the production crew, also of costumers, makeup experts, nurse, caterers, and all of the ancillary performers, like extras or stunt people. An index gives access to a text that should be intriguing and informative for television viewers.

Fischer-Nagel, Heiderose. *A Kitten Is Born*; written and with photographs by Heiderose and Andreas Fischer-Nagel; tr. by Andrea Mernan. Putnam, 1983. 83-4601. ISBN 0-399-20961-1. 34p. \$9.95.

Like *The Birth of Sunset's Kittens*, by Carla Stevens (1969), this shows the birth process clearly in color photographs of excellent quality. The text is candid,

R straightforward, informal in tone and restricted almost entirely to facts; there's some
K-4 narration but no fictionalization. The kittens are, of course, beguiling. This is a very
good first book on the birth process.

C.U. Science

Franco, Marjorie. *Love in a Different Key*. Houghton, 1983. 83-10653. ISBN 0-395-34827-7.
154p. \$9.95.

R The double threads in the structure of a serious story are Neenah's love for
7-9 Michael and her despair when he has an emotional breakdown, and her dedication to
her career as a pianist. When Michael is sent to a mental hospital, Neenah performs
badly at a recital where she and another student play a two-piano composition; she
decides she will give up playing, but as time passes and Michael improves, she
changes her mind. The book ends on a positive note with Michael's recovery and
Neenah's performing at a school concert. Franco is perceptive in depicting charac-
ters and their relationships, and her writing has both candor and fluency.

Gantz, David. *Blipo One's Book of Facts and Fun*; written and illus. by David Gantz. Crown,
1983. 83-7642. ISBN 0-517-55052-0. 25p. \$4.95.

NR A flat, oversize book about a robot and three little rabbits is illustrated with garish
2-3 pictures, in cartoon style, on overcrowded pages. Blipo rescues the rabbits when
they are pulled aloft by the kite they're flying ("I'll have you back on terra firma in no
time,") and then, as they wander about, gives them bits of information that relates to
what they see—more or less—and that have neither topical theme nor unity. Tulips
came from Turkey, only twelve passengers on the *Mayflower* were entitled to use
"Mr." or "Mrs.," paper comes from wood pulp, a herd of sixty cows can produce a
ton of milk in one day, in 1884 a man began a three-year ride around the world on a
high-wheeled bicycle, et cetera. Some of the text is in balloon captions, some in
conventional type lines. This does give snippets of odd facts, but it's not cohesive
and is visually unattractive.

Giles, Barbara. *Upright Downfall*; by Barbara Giles, Roy Fuller, and Adrian Rumble. Oxford,
1983. ISBN 0-19-276052-1. 48p. \$9.95.

R Three contemporary British poets have chosen the best of their unpublished poems
4-7 for children to be combined in a volume that has the appeal of variety. Barbara Giles
writes poems that are fanciful and graceful, light poems that are slightly marred by
dips into whimsy and occasionally, faulty scansion. Roy Fuller's poems have more
depth, quick flashes of insight, and a combination of simple style and sophisticated
concepts. Adrian Rumble's poems may prove the most appealing to many children,
since they have the strongest sense of narrative of the three and since they are—at
least those chosen for this book—about space and space flight.

Godden, Rumer. *The Valiant Chatti-maker*; illus. by Jerroo Roy. Viking, 1983. 83-7000. ISBN
0-670-74236-8. 61p. \$9.95.

Ad The illustrations for this traditional tale from India are in color and in black and
4-6 white (the former very handsome) and have a strong sense of design and a sly humor.
The story, available in other collections and also in such other versions as the
Grimms' "The Valiant Tailor," has been expanded by Godden and elaborated.
Perhaps the author heard the tale during her childhood in India and is repeating it as
she heard it, but such phrases as "Though he was not handsome, having a dark
skin . . ." are jarring. Godden's familiarity with Indian customs and language gives
the story color and vitality; the writing style is excellent, a deft embroidery of the

story of the meek man who, inebriated, behaved so courageously in capturing a tiger that he won wealth and kudos.

C.U. Storytelling

Greenberg, Jan. *No Dragons to Slay*. Farrar, 1983. 83-17200. ISBN 0-374-35528-2. 119p. \$10.95.

Ad 7-9 A high school athlete, Thomas was plunged into despair when a lump on his hip was diagnosed as cancer; the treatments made him weak and ill, he was embarrassed by the baldness they caused; he was irritated by the protectiveness and anguish of his parents. When a younger friend of his mother's, on whom he had a crush, suggested that he might go on a dig, Thomas took the opportunity to get away. While working on the dig he made new, close friends and found it easier to adjust to his condition when he learned that he was capable of caring and being cared about. In an epilogue, a journal entry indicates that Thomas will live; he still has moments of panic about a recurrence of his illness, but he does plan for the future. This isn't strong in structure, but it gives a very convincing and sympathetic picture, often a touching one, of the fears and problems of an adolescent who faces the possibility of his own death.

D.V. Fear, overcoming; Self-confidence

Griffith, Helen V. *More Alex and the Cat*; illus. by Donald Carrick. Greenwillow, 1983. 83-1411. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-02292-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-02293-6. 55p. Library ed. \$8.59; Trade ed. \$9.50.

R 1-3 A sequel to *Alex and the Cat* (reviewed in the May, 1982 issue) offers, again, three stories for the beginning reader and for those other primary grades readers who appreciate nuance of style and sly humor combined with a modest vocabulary and some skillfully-incorporated repetition for the reinforcement of reading skills. The cat is jaded, wise, and tolerant—up to a point; he takes Alex's silliness patiently. Alex, an engaging if not particularly intelligent dog, fusses about almost everything but is easily distracted and rather easily pleased. These brief stories are also nice for reading aloud to preschool children.

C.U. Reading aloud; Reading, beginning

Grimm, Jakob Ludwig Karl. *The Shoemaker and the Elves*; ad. and illus. by Cynthia and William Birrer. Lothrop, 1983. 83-1145. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-01988-9; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-01989-7. 30p. Library ed. \$10.12; Trade ed. \$11.00.

Ad K-2 Framed by attractive bands of geometric design, the fabric and stitchery illustrations for a favorite German folktale are colorful and ornate, folk-art to fit the genre. The brilliant turquoise of the elves is a bit jarring (there's also a virulent pink) but this makes an interesting variant of other picture book versions of the story of the kindly shoemaker who is helped by the elves in his work, makes clothes for them to show his gratitude, and lives in peace and prosperity the rest of his life.

D.V. Kindness to others

Henkes, Kevin. *Margaret & Taylor*; written and illus. by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow, 1983. 82-21134. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-01425-9; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-01426-7. 64p. Library ed. \$7.63; Trade ed. \$8.50.

Ad K-3 Soft pencil drawings illustrate an episodic story told in low key and showing a clear understanding of sibling relations. Taylor is four, and his older sister Margaret is able to thwart him repeatedly—although her strategy doesn't always work, Margaret tries

assiduously to make Taylor jealous or get him into trouble. Taylor is depicted as gullible, gentle, and forgiving. It's all very true to life, but a bit on the tepid side.

D.V. Brothers-sisters

Herbst, Judith. *Sky Above and Worlds Beyond*; illus. by Richard Rosenblum; sky charts by George Lovi. Atheneum, 1983. 82-13749. ISBN 0-689-30974-0. 219p. \$14.95.

R
6- An enthusiastic and informed amateur star-lover, Herbst writes in a vigorous, informal style about early civilizations and their knowledge of astronomy, about the solar system and all of its planets, moons, stars, black holes, and supernovas, about other galaxies, about space exploration and what it may bring in the future. Occasionally the text deviates from its informational role to include (for example) an imaginary tour group visiting the moon under NASA sponsorship. Despite this sort of interpolation, usually a bit on the cute side, the book could, because of its coverage and its enthusiasm, serve well to interest readers enough to encourage further reading. A bibliography, seasonal star maps, and an index are appended.

C.U. Science

Hoguett, Susan Ramsay. *I Unpacked My Grandmother's Trunk*; written and illus. by Susan Ramsay Hoguett. Dutton, 1983. 83-1701. ISBN 0-525-44069-0. 52p. \$10.95.

Ad
K-3 Instructions are provided for those children who may not be familiar with the word game in which each player in turn adds an object (or creature) in alphabetical order and cumulative arrangement. Pages are alternately full and three-quarter size; the clean, bright paintings begin on spacious pages and, as the game progresses, the pages become increasingly filled as an acrobat, a bear, a cloud, a dinosaur, an eagle, a fairy . . . and so on . . . cumulate. The book is not, apparently, intended to stimulate original concepts since the instructions close with, "If using this book for the first time, players should first go through the book, then close it and play the game from memory." Although in itself imaginative, the book is therefore meant to exercise the child's memory rather than imagination.

Hoke, Helen L., comp. *Uncanny Tales of Unearthly and Unexpected Horrors*. Lodestar, 1983. 83-8911. ISBN 0-525-66919-1. 126p. \$11.95.

Ad
7- For adolescents who are addicted to the occult and the eerie, this anthology of short stories (nine tales, all previously published) should be attractive. Some have to do with ghosts or murder; the range of literary quality varies from slightly tedious/slightly contrived to some stories that are deftly structured and written.

Holabird, Katharine. *Angelina Ballerina*; illus. by Helen Craig. Potter, 1983. 83-8233. ISBN 0-517-55083-0. 22p. \$5.95.

Ad
K-2 Pastel pictures, deftly drawn but a bit sugary, illustrate a story about a little mouse who danced all the time, knocking things over, being late for school, and never cleaning her messy room. When her parents decided she should start ballet lessons, Angelina was so happy that "From that day on, Angelina came downstairs when her mother called her, she straightened up her room, and she went to school on time." After working hard at her ballet lessons many years, the story hastily concludes, she became a famous ballerina. Children will probably enjoy the success story and the fact that the characters are mice, but this is both slight and superficial, albeit inoffensive.

Hunter, Mollie. *Hold On to Love*. Harper, 1984. 83-47695. Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-022687-0; Library ed. ISBN 0-06-022688-9. 288p. Library ed. \$11.89; Trade ed. \$11.50.

R
7-10 A sequel to *A Sound of Chariots* (reviewed in the December, 1972 issue) is probably destined to be more popular with readers, both because of the love interest and because it is less concerned with bereavement. Bridie, now working in her grandfather's flower shop in Edinburgh, is taking night classes to help in her goal of becoming a writer. She is unconscionably rude to Peter, a classmate, because of a disappointment over a teacher; it's a year before she sees him again. Peter is "nice" enough to win even her very conservative grandparents' approbation, but his possessiveness irritates Bridie, and there's a rupture in the relationship. The advent of World War II and Peter's enlistment make Bridie remember her grandmother's advice about holding on to love, so she makes the overture; Peter responds joyfully, and the story ends with a marriage when Peter comes home on Survivor's Leave after his ship goes down at Dunkirk. This is a strong love story, not too sweet, and it evokes a vivid picture of the Scottish conservative, that stratum of urban merchants who had all the answers, and against whom Bridie could so easily have rebelled—save for the fact that she loved her kinfolk. This is also the story of a struggling young writer and as such it should appeal to all those readers who, secretly or openly, share Bridie's dreams.

Kemp, Gene. *No Place Like*. Faber, 1983. ISBN 0-571-13063-1. 117p. \$9.95.

R
7-10 The humor and vitality that abounded in Kemp's earlier books for younger readers are also evident in this, her first novel for adolescents. Pete, the protagonist and narrator, is not doing well at school and feels keenly the contrast between him and his overachieving older sister. His mother is patient and compassionate, his father critical and impatient. Peter is disturbed when two of his classmates begin to hang about his home, counting on the obvious sympathy of Pete's mother to feed, house, and advise them; Ma doesn't believe Pete when he says Oliver and Kenny are criminals. Tension and suspense mount, as the two young thugs threaten and bully Pete, and the story ends with Pete finally losing his temper, and a volatile police confrontation that puts Oliver and Kenny in jail. The plot is capably structured and developed, but the chief appeal of this British novel will probably be the strong characterization and the natural, often witty dialogue.

D.V. Age-mate relations; Father-son relations; Fear, overcoming

Khan, Hassina. *Tariq Learns to Swim*; illus. by Bal Athalye. Bodley Head, 1983. ISBN 0-370-30530-2. 24p. \$9.95.

Ad
2-3 The older child in a middle-class Asian family in England, Tariq is unhappy because his classmates enjoy football (the game is British football, or soccer) and he isn't good at it. Feeling left out and unhappy, Tariq mopes at home. He's delighted when his father suggests that he take swimming lessons; he enjoys swimming and becomes proficient at it. The book ends abruptly, when some of the boys from his school come to the pool, see Tariq, and comment on how well he swims; one of the boys shouts "Hey, Tariq! Catch!" and throws a ball to him. The illustrations are adequate but at times awkward watercolor paintings; the story follows a familiar achievement-acceptance pattern but has little substance, and perhaps its chief strength is that it fills a need in depicting a child who is a member of a minority in the culture in which he lives.

D.V. Fear, overcoming

Kidd, Ronald. *Sizzle and Splat*. Lodestar, 1983. 83-9022. ISBN 0-525-66917-5. 122p. \$10.95.

R 6-9 Sizzle is the narrator, and she's critical about everything to do with Splat except the way he plays the tuba; she's trumpet soloist in the Pirelli Youth Orchestra. When Pirelli takes her along to plead with composer Hans Kleiman that he write a piece for them so that the orchestra can stay alive financially, Kleiman takes a liking to Sizzle, writes a piece with a trumpet solo, and also provides a cryptogram and a prize for the audience member who can solve it. Kleiman dies, and there are notes threatening disaster if his piece is performed; Kleiman's nephew is kidnapped, Sizzle and Splat are shot at, the score is stolen, etc. Self-elected detectives, the two young people cannot convince the police that their clues are valuable. Needless to say, they encounter danger and solve the mystery—and the orchestra gets a bequest of a million dollars it would have lost had not Sizzle and Splat (Prudence and Arthur, actually) solved the mystery as fast as they had. The plot is not convincing, nor is the obduracy of the policeman they try to persuade, but the book has some strong assets: the dialogue is very funny, there's lots of action and some suspense, and the story is imbued both with musical lore and a comparatively rare depiction of adolescents who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about classical music.

Kilroy, Sally. *Babies' Bodies*; written and illus. by Sally Kilroy. Four Winds, 1983. ISBN 0-590-07914-X. 14p. \$2.95.

Ad 1-3 yrs. One of a set of board books for very young children (the others are *Baby Colors*, *Animal Noises*, and *Noisy Homes*), this has a single figure and a single word on each of the sturdy, uncluttered pages. A dotted line (or lines) that goes from "face" or "mouth" or "hands" to the appropriate place in the illustration helps in the process of identification. The pictures, line and wash, are not impressive technically, but they are simply drawn and brightly colored, they show both black and white children, and they culminate in a page that shows all the body parts that have been named (with no arrows) to give the child the satisfaction of recapitulation.

Kipling, Rudyard. *The Elephant's Child*; illus. by Lorinda Bryan Cauley. Harcourt, 1983. 82-21266. ISBN 0-15-225385-8. 44p. \$12.95.

R K-2 Few writers have imitated the style of folkloric introduction better than Rudyard Kipling: "In the High and Far-Off Times / the Elephant, O Best Beloved, had no trunk." This "Why" story has long been a favorite with children to read alone, to hear read aloud, or to hear as a told story. While the *Just So Stories* are enjoyed by readers in the middle grades, this picture book version is more appropriate for reading aloud to younger children. The illustrations, alternating double-page spreads in black and white or in soft greens and earthtones, echo the humor and vitality of the story about how the elephant got his trunk—and what mischief he did after that.

Lasker, Joe. *The Great Alexander the Great*; written and illus. by Joe Lasker. Viking, 1983. 83-5859. ISBN 0-670-34841-4. 32p. \$13.95.

Ad 3-5 In this picture book biography of Alexander the Great, the attempt to present short sentences and a simplified vocabulary is consonant with the publisher's designation of the book as a read-aloud version, as is the profusion of colorful and handsome illustrations. However, both the sophistication of illustrative details and the subject matter indicate that the book is more appropriate for readers who can understand the ancient world and Alexander's military conquests, the dominating feature of his life. The story begins with the famous episode of the seven-year-old Alexander taming the fiery steed Bucephalus, then launches quickly into an account more martial than personal.

Levy, Elizabeth. *The Shadow Nose*; illus. By Mordecai Gerstein. Morrow, 1983. 83-7925. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-02410-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-02411-4. 55p. Library ed. \$7.63; Trade ed. \$8.50.

Ad 3-5 Lamont, who is the fifth-grade narrator of this mystery story, has been named for Lamont Cranston, a character in the old radio show known for its tag line, "The Shadow knows." Because of his name, residents of his Greenwich Village neighborhood suspect Lamont when a series of silhouette paintings appears on the sidewalk. Determined to earn the award for identifying the culprit and to clear his name, Lamont and his sister set out to solve the mystery, and do. A complication is introduced when the people who have been caricatured in shadow paintings get blackmail letters, but there is little penalty exacted of either the painter or the writer of the letters. The plot has some flaws of logic, but it's a lively enough story to be enjoyable despite this weakness, and the light style, well-defined setting, and evocation of a sense of community compensate for it.

C.U. Community life (Unit)

McNaughton, Colin. *Autumn*; written and illus. by Colin McNaughton. Dial, 1983. 83-45235. ISBN 0-8037-0043-1. 10p. \$4.95.

Spring; written and illus. by Colin McNaughton. Dial, 1983. 83-45233. ISBN 0-8037-0044-X. 10p. \$4.95.

Summer; written and illus. by Colin McNaughton. Dial, 1983. 83-45234. ISBN 0-8037-0042-3. 10p. \$4.95.

Winter; written and illus. by Colin McNaughton. Dial, 1983. 83-45236. ISBN 0-8037-0040-7. 10p. \$4.95.

R 3-5 yrs. Four hardbound books introduce the year's seasons to young children. This sprightly quartet focuses on activities appropriate to the season rather than on the season itself, so that the pages for *Autumn*, for example, show blowing leaves, bonfire meals, harvest time, and falling apples. The captions are just that simple: "Fallen apples," "Fallen leaves," and the colorful pictures fill but do not strain the page space with their action and humor.

McPhail, David. *Fix-It*; written and illus. by David McPhail. Dutton, 1984. 83-16459. ISBN 0-525-44093-3. 21p. \$7.95.

Ad 3-5 yrs. Distraught when the television set won't work, little Emma, a bear, gets her parents out of bed one morning with the demand that they fix the set. They try and fail. Emma weeps. They call a repairman, who also fails to find out what's wrong. Emma's parents do what they can to distract and amuse her; by the time her father fixes the television set (it had been unplugged) Emma is busy "reading" to her doll. The ending is a bit flat and the fact that the repairman didn't check the plug not quite credible, but the humor of the story, the familiarity of the situation, and the deft, amusing illustrations should appeal to young listeners.

Merriam, Eve. *If Only I Could Tell You*; illus. by Donna Diamond. Knopf, 1983. 83-4377. Library ed. ISBN 0-394-96043-2; Paper ed. ISBN 0-394-86043-8. 81p. Library ed. \$8.99; Paper ed. \$2.95.

R 8-10 In a collection of short, tender poems, Merriam captures the delight and wonder of young love, the feeling that the love is unique, the absorption in self and the loved one, the desolation when separation comes. The poetry is deceptively simple, controlled in style and deep in its empathy and insight. A few of the selections are on other themes, other kinds of love, but most have to do with the aching romantic love of adolescence.

Mills, Claudia. *All the Living*. Macmillan, 1983. 83-61235. ISBN 0-02-766990-4. 130p. \$9.95.

R
4-6 Karla, age ten, and her younger brother Jamie are delighted at the prospect of spending the summer in a Maine cabin left to Jamie by the uncle for whom he'd been named. They loved the cabin, the woods, and the lake—but each had a problem that almost spoiled the summer: Jamie's was that their father always seemed disappointed in him and criticized him; Karla's was that she had become morbidly sensitive to the thought of death, even to eating anything that had been killed. Her parents conceded that she had the right to become a vegetarian, but were really annoyed when she didn't want to pick berries because the berries had a right to life. When Jamie won his father's approbation by catching a large trout, Karla called him a murderer and refused to have anything to do with her brother. This quarrel ended when Jamie saved Karla's life (a storm and spill while boating) and when Karla read a passage in the Bible that made her feel more concerned about the living than the dead. The ending is a bit contrived, but not unbelievable; the book is written in a casually flowing style and shows insight and sympathy for all the characters in a family with a realistic balance of weaknesses and strengths.

D.V. Brothers-sisters; Death, adjustment to; Father-child relations

Munthe, Nelly. *Meet Matisse*. Little, 1983. 83-9905. ISBN 0-316-58960-8. 45p. illus. \$10.95.

SpC
4-6 First published in England, this has a title that may seem misleading, since it is not a biography of Henri Matisse, nor a discussion of all his work. Instead, it focuses on the cut-paper compositions Matisse did at the end of his life, when he was no longer able to paint; it is both a discussion of his ideas and techniques in doing such work and, to an extent, a set of instructions for readers to help them understand how they may do the same kind of work, how to play with shapes and colors, and how to make effective pictures. Probably this is best included in a collection of art books.

C.U. Art—study and teaching

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Night Cry*. Atheneum, 1984. 83-15569. ISBN 0-689-31017-X. 154p. \$10.95.

Ad
5-8 Naylor stretches a bit to pull the plot elements into a cohesive whole, but for most readers the facts that the heroine is intrepid (believably) and that suspense builds nicely in a dramatic story will compensate for what contrivance is used. Thirteen, motherless, living on a Mississippi farm, Ellen's disturbed when her father takes a salesman's job and leaves her for several days at a time. She's competent, but she's frightened by the horse that's thrown and killed her only brother, by the dire warnings of an eccentric old neighbor, and by the strange man who's been doing farm work in return for food for himself and the sick wife Ellen's never seen. The man proves to be a kidnapper (his wife, not at all ill, is his associate) and it is Ellen who faces all her fears to rescue the four-year-old son of a wealthy man, receiving kudos and financial gain. Just this side of credible, the book is adequately written structurally and has some good (and some overdrawn) characterization; readers will enjoy the tension and the action.

D.V. Courage

Needle, Jan. *Another Fine Mess*; illus. by Roy Bentley. Andre Deutsch, 1984. 81-67624. ISBN 0-233-97370-2. 189p. \$10.95.

M
5-6 An eccentric professor, two children, conveniently absent parents, and a time machine . . . familiar elements don't always produce the same results but in this case (alas) they do combine to produce a tedious fantasy in which the three travellers are

caught in another age. That it's an age of medieval alchemy doesn't ameliorate the overdrawn and often gushy fantasy.

Noren, Catherine. *The Way We Looked*. Lodestar, 1983. 82-9682. ISBN 0-525-66738-5. 116p. illus. with photographs. \$10.95.

Ad 7-10 Profusely illustrated with old photographs that are used both as decoration and example, this is a book of advice on collecting and assembling snapshots in a way that will make the collections more significant. The author includes suggestions for interviewing family members as well as advice on writing an accompanying text. Some of the suggestions are sensible, some simplistic; on the whole, although the book may prove useful, it seems overextended by repetition. A bibliography and an index are included.

C.U. Hobbies

O'Connor, Jane. *Just Good Friends*. Harper, 1983. 82-48851. Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-024588-3; Library ed. ISBN 0-06-024591-3. 216p. Library ed. \$9.89; Trade ed. \$9.95.

R 6-8 Joss is only thirteen, but she's suddenly grown very tall and almost as suddenly blossomed into "a teenage Dolly Parton," and she's become self-conscious about how her best friend Fletcher is reacting to all this. Fletcher's reaction is to lunge, and there's a quarrel. Joss is upset by that and also by her suspicion that her father, an academic, is having an affair with one of his students (it's her mother who's having an extramarital flirtation) but she's stimulated by discovering that the boy she likes, Twig, seems to feel the same way. There is nothing highly dramatic here, but the style (both in exposition and dialogue) has good flow and pace, the humor is restrained, the characters and their relationships are vividly real.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Friendship values; Parent-child relations

O'Dell, Scott. *The Castle in the Sea*. Houghton, 1983. 83-12870. ISBN 0-395-34831-5. 184p. \$12.95.

Ad 7-10 In a sequel to *The Spanish Smile* (reviewed in the January, 1983 issue) sixteen-year-old Lucinda de Cabrillo y Benevides, now an heiress, is again the narrator. Her crazed, despotic father is dead; his evil henchman, Villaverde, thwarts her at every turn, ruling her island and castle (a stronghold off the coast of California) with a feudal hand (the setting is contemporary) and importing a duenna from Spain, all part of his plan to turn the island over to Spain. Lucinda's fiance and his mother arrive from Spain, also, to formalize a marriage arranged years before by her father. The writing style is smooth and the setting colorful; what weakens the book—even though it is structured in the Gothic mode—are the stereotypical characters (the venal Villaverde, the kindly priest, the stern duenna) and the surfeit of disasters and near-disasters as Villaverde tries to drive Lucinda mad and gain power; the plot culminates in an explosion planned by Villaverde when he knows he cannot gain control, an explosion in which the castle is blown up and in which Villaverde and Lucinda's fiance are killed.

Oleksy, Walter G. *Paramedics*; illus. with photographs. Messner, 1983. 83-13388. ISBN 0-671-44274-0. 64p. \$8.79.

R 5-7 Emergency medical care had long been available at several levels (ambulance crews, mobile heart units) but it was not until 1967 that the first paramedical unit was established. Special training for life-saving emergency procedures and the technology that makes direct communication with medical personnel at hospitals possible have

enabled paramedics to save countless lives. Oleksy describes, in a brisk, straightforward style, the training of paramedics, the work they do, and the problems they have. A brief chapter discusses careers in paramedics; sources of information are cited, and a one-page bibliography and an index are provided. The material is inherently dramatic; the text is crisp and informative.

Pearson, Tracey Campbell, illus. *Old Macdonald Had a Farm*. Dial, 1984. 83-18815. Trade ed. ISBN 0-8037-0068-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-0070-9. 23p. Library ed. \$9.89; Trade ed. \$9.95.

R As she did in the ebullient *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* (reviewed in the
3-6 November, 1983 issue) Pearson uses only the words of the song as her text. Here the
yrs. visual interpretation has less ingenuity, but it has no less charm, as the frolicsome
animals cumulate. The drawings have wit, humor, and action; the text has the ap-
peals of rhyme, rhythm, and cumulation. Music is provided at the back of the book.

Porte, Barbara Ann. *Jesse's Ghost and Other Stories*. Greenwillow, 1983. 83-1451. ISBN 0-688-02301-0. 105p. \$9.50.

Ad Linked, in Scheherezade style, by the italicized words of the storyteller, this is a
4-6 series of short stories (some comic, some macabre) that have an eerie quality in their
conception. The writing style is fluent, often capturing the cadence of the oral tradi-
tion; occasionally the phrasing is obscure or the structure capricious in a style rem-
iniscent of the work of Carl Sandburg. There is some magic (a cedar box that creates
a twin of whatever living creature lies in it) but most of the dozen tales are ghostly;
notes on folk sources are appended.

Roberts, Willo Davis. *Eddie and the Fairy Godpuppy*; illus. by Leslie Morrill. Atheneum, 1984. 83-15678. ISBN 0-689-31021-8. 125 p. \$10.95.

Ad This might almost have been designed as a television script, since it has a sure-fire
4-6 plot (a scamp of an orphan who gets adopted by the person for whom he cares most)
and an engaging protagonist, and a puppy smuggled into a Children's Home, and a
kindly handyman, and a cross housekeeper. Fortunately, the style is light, and the
story is believably concocted if not impressive in either theme or structure.

Rose, Karen. *Kristin and Boone*; by Karen Rose and Lynda Halfyard. Houghton, 1983. 83-12580. ISBN 0-395-34560-X. 209p. \$6.95.

M Like so many other versions, this is a Beauty and the Beast spin-off; it is in
6-9 first person, although the account is broken by changes in format: direct narration,
script style, and flashbacks, devices that may be a handicap to slower readers. Here
the narrator is beautiful Kristin, a fourteen-year-old film star; her director, a brilliant
dwarf, is the Beast. Expectably, Kristin learns to love and trust him; she flees to the
hospital where he is dying, in fact, on the night she is chosen for a major industry
award. There's also the complication of Kristin's mysterious father (a plot thread that
makes little contribution to the forward thrust of the story, although it gives the
authors an opportunity to develop an extra character) whom she'd been told was
dead by a protective mother. Boone, the director, is pictured as a creative genius who
molds Kristin in her role as Beauty in the version of "Beauty and the Beast" he is
filming. This gives a sympathetic picture of Boone, information about achondro-
plastic dwarfism, and an over-elaborated story built around the relationship between
Boone (he does not play the Beast in his film) and his teen-age Beauty.

D.V. Handicaps, overcoming

Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman. *Bartholomew the Bossy*; illus. by Normand Chartier. Macmillan, 1984. 83-17603. ISBN 0-02-782520-5. 32p. \$9.95.

R
K-2 A small skunk, Bartholomew was the "most popular boy on the block." Unfortunately, he took advantage of his popularity and began ordering his friends about—but he wasn't able to figure out why he lost his friends until he consulted a bossy, peremptory owl who gave Bartholomew a dose of his own medicine. Wiser, he made overtures to his old friends, making it clear to them that he was no longer bossy. This is a bit didactic, but the simple style and soft illustrations, the appeal of the animal characters, and the familiarity of the situation should attract readers.

D.V. Friendship values

Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman. *How to Meet a Gorgeous Guy*. Delacorte, 1983. 82-18284. ISBN 0-385-29302-X. 148p. \$13.95.

Ad
7-9 The title of the book is the title of an article that Lisa, Shari's cousin, is writing for *Acne Magazine*; Shari, the narrator, is dubious about the fact that Lisa wants her to be the guinea pig: to pick a gorgeous guy and get to know him. The idea is that the picking gets done by an average girl, and Shari acknowledges that she's average. She calls a handsome, popular senior, Craig, and asks for a date (she's a sophomore) and that starts a love affair that has its downs and ups: a rejection of Shari when Craig learns about the magazine article, a reunion and happy ending when Shari convinces him she'd picked him because he'd really appealed to her. The plot and style are both light and amusing, and the love interest is balanced by other facets of Shari's life. Characterization and relationships are competently handled, although there's little growth in the characters; the book is not substantial or impressive, but it's realistic and amusing.

D.V. Boy-girl relations

Smith, Robert Kimmel. *The War with Grandpa*; illus. by Richard Lauter. Delacorte, 1984. 83-14366. Trade ed. ISBN 0-385-29312-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-385-29314-3. 128p. Library ed. \$12.95; Trade ed. \$12.95.

Ad
4-6 The first person format of the story makes it possible for readers to identify with fifth-grader Peter's irritation when he has to give up his room to his grandfather, while he himself will be moved up to the third floor guest room. Peter's fond of Grandpa, but he's openly antagonistic about being evicted from his own room; he leaves warning notes and plays malicious tricks, so Grandpa's in no doubt about what's going on. Eventually Peter apologizes; eventually Grandpa gets the idea of fixing up the basement and, being a former construction worker, makes a nice apartment for himself. Peter moves back to his room . . . and the war is over. This presents a situation and a problem faced by many children, but it is presented in a superficial and over-extended fashion, the level of plot development more suitable for younger readers, and the characterization minimal.

D.V. Grandparent-child relations; Social behavior

Stanek, Muriel. *Don't Hurt Me, Mama*; illus. by Helen Cogancherry. Whitman, 1983. 83-16771. ISBN 0-8075-1689-9. 30p. \$8.25.

Ad
2-3 The small girl who is the narrator explains that there wasn't much money after Daddy left them, so they moved from their house to an apartment and that was when Mama "got mean and hit me, even when I wasn't bad." The school nurse discovers evidence of child abuse, explains to the child that her mother needs help, and paves the way for joining a community support group. The text (useful, but tepid in style

and static in pace) ends on the encouraging note, "We love each other, Mama and me."

Sullivan, George. *Screen Play: The Story of Video Games*. Warne, 1983. 83-10606. Trade ed. ISBN 0-7232-6251-9; Paper ed. ISBN 0-7232-6254-3. 88p. illus. with photographs. Trade ed. \$9.95; Paper ed. \$4.95.

Ad 6-9 While Sullivan gives full and clear information on how video games were invented, improved upon, and engineered, most of the text is devoted to detailed descriptions of individual games. The penultimate chapter describes some of the controversy over whether or not, and to what extent, playing such games may be damaging (psychologically and physically) to children and here the writing seems not quite objective. A final chapter discusses recent and projected high-tech advances, such as the "wrap-around environment" and increased interaction between player and machine. For readers who are not familiar with video games, some of the text may be less than interesting; for addicts, all of it should appeal. The typeface used makes the pages look solid with print; the glossary is in small print and the index even smaller.

C.U. Industries (Unit)

Tafari, Nancy. *Early Morning in the Barn*; written and illus. by Nancy Tafari. Greenwillow, 1983. 83-1436. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-02328-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-02329-0. 21p. Library ed. \$10.51; Trade ed. \$11.50.

Ad 2-4 yrs. A rooster crows "Cock a doodle doo," and three chicks run excitedly about the barn and barnyard cheeping a morning greeting to other animals (all of whom respond with their own sounds: quack, honk, maaa, kip-kip-zee (a bird), gobble, oink, and so on) until they come to their mother, "cluck, cluck." Not substantial, not unusual, but small children should enjoy learning and imitating the barnyard noises, and the pictures, washed in solid, clear colors, are—despite the fact that many animal figures are cut off by the edges of pages—appealing.

Walsh, Gillian Paton. *A Parcel of Patterns*. Farrar, 1983. 83-048143. ISBN 0-374-35750-1. 137p. \$10.95.

R 7-10 * A novel that is moving as a personal document, this is also impressive because it serves to illustrate dramatically the complexity and interdependence of community life. The time is 1665, the place a small English village that is being decimated by the plague and that finally agrees with its neighbors to choose isolation. The story is told by Mall, who loses her loved ones but finds love again when the long ordeal is over. Major characters are fictional, but many of the skillfully-integrated historical details are based on town records. A strong, strong story.

C.U. Community life (Unit)

D.V. Courage

Walton, Marilyn Jeffers. *Sparky's Valentine Victory*; illus. by Susan Jeschke. Raintree, 1983. 83-7321. ISBN 0-940742-20-9. 32p. \$10.69.

NR K-2 Gwendolyn has fitted tiny shoes with bottle-cap tops so that her chicken, Sparky, can win the Valentine's Day pet show. While waiting for the judging, Gwen says she'll have barbecued chicken when a friend offers to bring her lunch. Sparky hears another child say, "Barbecued chicken! How about barbecued SPARKY?" and runs away in a panic, causing other animals to riot. Later the chicken is sent to a farm, and Gwendolyn brings him a valentine. The pencil drawings have humor and vitality; the story is contrived, silly rather than funny, and choppy written.

Waugh, Charles G., ed. *The Newbery Award Reader*; ed. by Charles G. Waugh and Martin H. Greenberg. Harcourt, 1984. 83-22592. ISBN 0-15-257034-9. 256p. \$14.95.

R
4-7 An interesting collection of brief fiction pieces (either short stories or excerpts from longer works, although not necessarily Newbery Award books) written by some of the winners of the John Newbery Medal. Where material has been edited, Waugh and Greenberg have handled excisions capably; in Virginia Hamilton's "M. C. Higgins the Great," for example, material from two chapters is used and there is one cut, but the excerpt stands up well as an entity. While the caliber of the material is expectably high, some of it seems dated (Walter Edmonds) or slightly contrived (Lois Lenski). In all, an interesting anthology; many of the excerpts seem too juvenile for the age range advised by the publisher, age twelve up.

Weiss, Harvey. *Machines and How They Work*; written and illus. by Harvey Weiss. Crowell, 1983. 82-45925. Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-04299-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-690-04300-7. 80p. Library ed. \$10.89; Trade ed. \$10.95.

R
5-7 Clearly written, with line drawings that are carefully integrated with the text and expand its concepts, this is an excellent discussion of the six basic machines: the lever, inclined plane, screw, wedge, pulley, and wheel and axle. While there are many books on the subject, few are as explicit in showing how these six simple machines are incorporated into other, more complicated ones. Physical principles are stressed, so that the reader can always see why a machine—or a combination of machines—works to produce a desired effect. A final chapter describes simple machines the reader can build.

C.U. Science

Wolf, Bernard. *Firehouse*. Morrow, 1983. 83-1174. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-01734-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-01735-5. 80p. illus. with photographs. Library ed. \$8.59; Trade ed. \$9.50.

R
5-7 Illustrated with dramatic photographs, this describes the working life of the two companies (Engine, and Tower Ladder) in a firehouse on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Wolf writes primarily of how the men work in their dangerous job of fire fighting and of the equipment they use, but he also discusses the way of life in the station, thus bringing in a lighter note of bantering conversation among the firemen. The text gives a vivid picture of the stress and dedication of their lives, and it's candid about the lack of cooperation (from heckling crowds to arsonists) that increases their burden.

C.U. Community life (Unit)

Wood, Audrey. *Tugford Wanted to Be Bad*; written and illus. by Audrey Wood. Harcourt, 1983. 83-318. Trade ed. ISBN 0-15-291083-2; Paper ed. ISBN 0-15-291084-0. 30p. (Let Me Read Books). Trade ed. \$9.95; Paper ed. \$4.95.

M
K-2 Tugford is a mouse who thinks outlaws have more fun than anyone else, so he decides to put on an outlaw costume and do something bad; he buries a coin bank taken from his mother's closet. Tugford's parents return, they announce they can't celebrate Mother's birthday because they've been robbed, Tugford can't remember where he buried the coins, Father announces it was all a mistake (it was his wallet he'd meant, and that had only been misplaced) and they all go to a restaurant to celebrate. Brown-tinted drawings show middle-class mice who walk on two legs, often in pictures with cluttered backgrounds. The story is designated by the publisher as a "Let Me Read Book" with the review slip suggesting ages 4-8. Although fairly simply written, the vocabulary may be difficult for some beginning readers: words

like “rummage” or abbreviations like “I.O.U.” may prove discouraging. The story has some appealing elements (the mouse protagonist, the fun of pretending) but it’s both contrived and minatory.

D.V. Truthfulness

Worth, Valerie. *Gypsy Gold*. Farrar, 1983. 83-20607. ISBN 0-374-32828-5. 176p. \$10.95.

Ad 7-9 A romantic novel gets off to a slow start as sixteen-year-old Miranda runs off to be with the gypsies rather than accede to her parents’ plans for her marriage to an older man. Miranda proves to be worthy of the Gypsy way of life. There’s a mystic as well as a romantic element (Tarot cards, second sight) and in the end Miranda rejects a more conventional life for Gypsy gold. This is an adequately written novel, but not impressive in its structure or characterization. The poetic touch that informs and softens Worth’s verse seems merely to bedim here.

Yabuuchi, Masayuki. *Animals Sleeping*; written and illus. by Masayuki Yabuuchi. Philomel, 1983. 82-24620. ISBN 0-399-20983-2. 29p. \$8.95.

R 3-5 yrs. First published in Japan, this has paintings of half a dozen animals, shown first when they are awake and then when they are asleep: a flamingo stands on one leg, an otter sleeps on its back, a tiger sleeps on a tree limb, etc. The choice seems arbitrary and the coverage is slight, but the book can give small children the idea of variation and may provoke curiosity about other animals’ sleeping habits. Although brief, this is an attractive book; the text is minimal, the pages spacious, and the paintings carefully detailed, accurate, and richly textured.

Yep, Laurence. *The Serpent’s Children*. Harper, 1984. 82-48855. Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-026809-3; Library ed. ISBN 0-06-026812-3. 288p. Library ed. \$12.89; Trade ed. \$12.95.

R 5-8 In a first-person account of Chinese peasant life, Cassia begins her story by describing her father’s decision to go off and fight with the Manchu against the foreign devils who have brought opium into the Middle Kingdom. Although he and Mother have been active in the Work (the expulsion of the Manchu oppressors) they feel that they must unite against a common enemy. Cassia’s mother dies, and the young girl rebels against her relatives’ decisions, taking refuge in her home with little brother Foxfire until their wounded father returns. The rest of the story focuses on the generation gap between Father, an embittered political activist, and Foxfire, the dreamy youth who decides to go to America so that he can send money home to his nearly-starving father and sister. It is Cassia who bridges the gap, loyal to her father but pleading always for a reconciliation with Foxfire, remembering that they were of the Young clan, children of the serpent who must not fight each other. This is a powerful and vivid novel despite the fact that there are points at which the story sags because of slowed pace. The characters are strongly drawn, and the picture of the Chinese rural community convincing.

C.U. History—China

D.V. Father-son relations; Family relations

Yepsen, Roger. *Train Talk*; written and illus. by Roger Yepsen. Pantheon, 1983. 83-4062. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-85750-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-95750-4. 85p. Library ed. \$9.99; Trade ed. \$9.95.

Although the text has some repetition and occasionally talks down to the reader (“You can’t just yell at a moving train and expect the engineer to understand you”) it

R
5- should be a delight for railroad buffs and may even create a few. It tells everything but everything about electric signals, signs, symbols, hand signals, lanterns, engine signals, flares . . . what they signify and how they're used. Whistles. Tickets and timetables and the names of trains and even the tell-tale signs of danger on tracks and ties. There's lots of colorful railroad terminology and lots of information here.

Yorinks, Arthur. *It Happened in Pinsk*; illus. by Richard Egielski. Farrar, 1983. 83-1727. ISBN 0-374-34658-5. 27p. \$11.95.

R
2-4 Chelm had better look to its laurels, because Irv Irving and other citizens of Pinsk are champion noodleheads. A man in comfortable circumstances, Irv is always disgruntled; one morning he wakes without a head. "Oh, Irv!" says his wife, "Every day you lose something. Your keys. Your glasses. Now this." Wearing a paper bag with a face drawn on it, Irv goes out to look for his head (at times he is greeted with glad cries of "Uncle Eugene!" or "Leo Totski! It's you!") and he finds his head being used as a model in a hat shop, runs off with it, and is never dissatisfied again. The pictures are as bland and funny as the story, and just as deftly executed.

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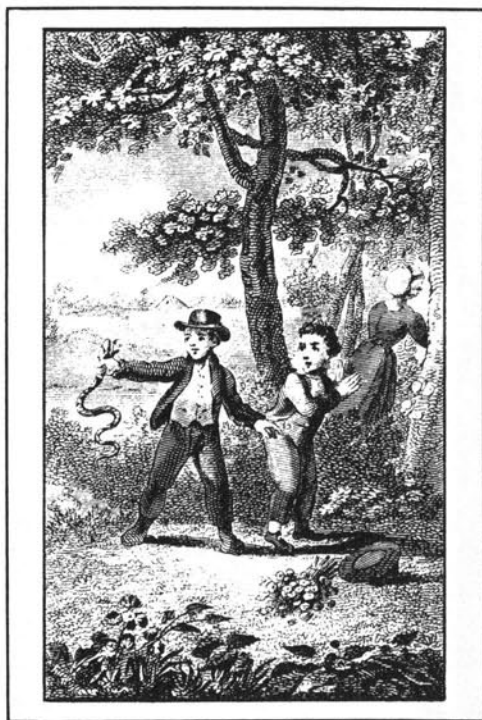
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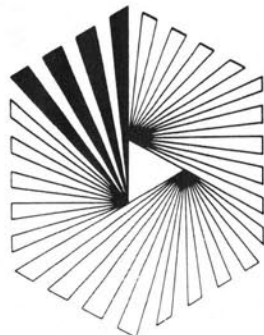
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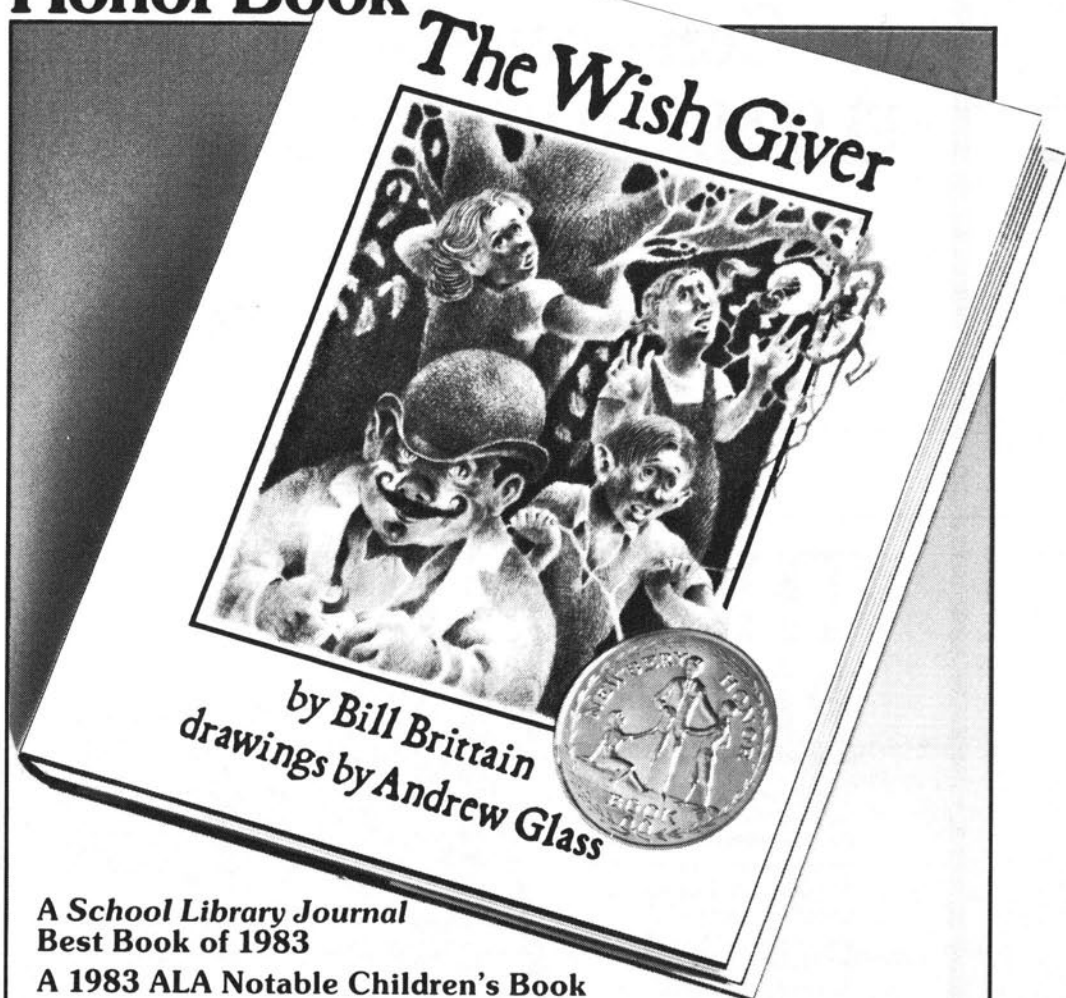
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